

AIMS Grade 5 Writing Sample Test and Think-Throughs

Grade 5

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Introduction

Dear Students,

This AIMS guide is a way to give you experience in taking AIMS. The samples are not supposed to be a practice test. They give you a sample of the kinds of questions that you can find on AIMS. The best way to make sure you can Meet and Exceed on AIMS is to be in class, be prepared, and be on time to class each day. The way to meet your goals on AIMS is to learn in class and complete your homework.

Sometimes students get nervous when taking tests. They may need some help with test-taking strategies. In this document, you can take an AIMS sample test of writing multiple choice items. Following the test, you will see that some of the items have explanations of how to find the best answer. This will help you think through the questions, just like you do in class. There are also two AIMS Writing responses with explanations of why they received the scores they have.

When you look at the Answer Key, you will also see the Strand, Concept, and Performance Objective that is being measured with each item. This is listed so you can see how it connects to the lessons your teacher creates from the Arizona Academic Standards. Take the Sample Test, check your answers, and then read through the three items with explanations. Compare your answers and thoughts to the ones presented.

Good luck and have fun!

Teachers – Please help your students understand the following important facts.

- The AIMS Writing Student Guides and Think-Throughs follow the AIMS Writing Blueprint for the 2004 Writing Academic Standard, but only represent one-third of the number of items that are on the actual AIMS 3-8 and AIMS HS assessments.
- The best way to prepare students for AIMS is to be sure they know and are able to do the grade-level performance objectives in each content area tested. Your lessons based on these grade-level writing standards are the best way for students to gain the necessary skill and knowledge to be successful.
- The activities contained in this document will give experience in taking AIMS. It is not a practice test. Students practice by doing classroom assignments and homework.
- Students should work through the sample test as if it is AIMS so they can experience answering items in a test-like setting. Don't allow them to use support materials that aren't available when taking AIMS.
- The two exemplar writing responses for score points 4 and 6 offer examples of good writing for AIMS. Students will benefit from having the explanations discussed in class.

AIMS Grade 5 Writing Sample Test

**Writing
Sample Test**

Grade 5

Directions: Read the paragraph and answer numbers 1 through 4.

(1) Your backpack is a great tool for being prepared it will keep your belongings neat and easy to find if you take time to organize. (2) You should use folders to keep papers from getting wrinkled or damaged. (3) A pencil case will make your writing tools easy to find. (4) If you carry your lunch, be sure it is in a hard shell container so your sandwich is fit to eat. (5) Only carry the books you need for homework. (6) Too many books will cause your backpack to tear. (7) Too many books will hurt your back.

1 Read the sentence.

If you use a brown bag, put it in the top of your backpack to keep your lunch from being destroyed.

What is the **best** place for this sentence?

- A between sentences 1 and 2
- B between sentences 3 and 4
- C between sentences 4 and 5
- D between sentences 5 and 6

2 What is the **best** way to combine sentences 6 and 7?

- A Too many books will cause your backpack to tear and will hurt your back.
- B Too many books will cause your backpack to tear but too many books will hurt your back.
- C Too many books will cause your backpack to tear and too many books will hurt your back.
- D Too many books will cause your backpack to tear because too many books will hurt your back.

3 Which words **best** replaces is fit to eat in sentence 4?

- A is hot
- B is fresh
- C isn't torn
- D isn't smashed

Go On 

4 What is the **best** way to correct sentence 1?

- A** Your backpack is a great tool for being prepared, It will keep your belongings neat and easy to find if you take time to organize.
- B** Your backpack is a great tool for being prepared. It will keep your belongings neat and easy to find if you take time to organize.
- C** Your backpack is a great tool for being prepared? It will keep your belongings neat and easy to find if you take time to organize.
- D** correct as is

Directions: Read the paragraph and answer Numbers 5 and 6.

(1) Looking for sand dollars on the beach is a challenge. (2) Most people give up after only a few minutes. (3) The first time my brother Toby and I walked along the ocean looking for sand dollars, I gave up in about 15 minutes. (4) Toby finds at least one every time he goes to the beach. (5) I should sneak into his room at night and take one from his dresser. (6) Tomorrow I will have another chance to find one.

5 Which sentence is the **best** conclusion for this paragraph?

- A** I will hide it from Toby.
- B** I could buy a sand dollar at the gift shop.
- C** Toby knows how anxious I am to find one.
- D** My own sand dollar will prove that I have patience.

6 Which sentence is **not** a good detail to support the topic of the paragraph?

- A** sentence 3
- B** sentence 4
- C** sentence 5
- D** sentence 6

Go On 

Directions: Now read and answer numbers 7 through 9.

7 Read the sentence.

Since Carlos understands Spanish, you can ask it what *dos* means.

What is the correct way to write this sentence?

- A** Since Carlos understands Spanish, he can ask it what *dos* means.
- B** Since Carlos understands Spanish, she can ask it what *dos* means.
- C** Since Carlos understands Spanish, you can ask him what *dos* means.
- D** Since Carlos understands Spanish, you can ask them what *dos* means.

8 Read the sentence.

Marcie and Robin skated to Jen's house, and they play for an hour.

What is the correct way to write this sentence?

- A** Marcie and Robin skated to Jen's house, and they plays for an hour.
- B** Marcie and Robin skated to Jen's house, and they played for an hour.
- C** Marcie and Robin skated to Jen's house, and they playing for an hour.
- D** correct as is

9 You are writing a letter to your principal to get permission to have a school celebration. What is the **best** sentence to include in your letter?

- A** A celebration for us kids will be da bomb!
- B** A celebration is one good way to make us like you.
- C** Will you please consider allowing us to have a celebration?
- D** We want a celebration and we are not taking no for an answer.



Grade 5 AIMS Sample Writing Test Key

The Answer Key shows you the Strand, Concept, and Performance Objective that each item is addressing. This will help you and your teacher to identify which Concepts from the Arizona Academic Writing Standard that you may need to study more.

1	2.2.3	C
2	2.5.1	A
3	2.4.1	D
4	2.6.2	B
5	2.2.5	D
6	2.1.1	C
7	2.6.12	C
8	2.6.13	B
9	2.3.1	C

AIMS Grade 5 Writing Think-Throughs

The items on the next few pages are from the sample test you just finished. They have been worked out for you to show the thought process behind finding the answers.

As you go through them, see how your thoughts compare to the ones given. Not every item from the sample test will be shown in this same way.

The number for each item matches the same number that is in the sample test. This way, if you got the item incorrect, you can compare your answers and go back to see what you may have done differently.

Then, after the Think-Through items, you will find an exemplar paper at score point 4 and one at score point 6. Study these papers and the annotations that go with each. If you want to look at more exemplar papers, ask your teacher for the web address where other annotated papers for your grade level are posted.

Selected Items with Think-Throughs**2** What is the **best** way to combine sentences 6 and 7?

Sentence 6 is “Too many books will cause your backpack to tear.” and sentence 7 is “Too many books will hurt your back.” The first thing I notice is that many of the same words are used in both sentences. Combining the sentences should let me use fewer words. I also know that when you combine words or sentences, a conjunction or combining word is used.

Answer A has used three fewer words and added the conjunction “and.” The new sentence makes sense. But before I choose it, I want to look at the other answers because the word “best” is bolded in the question. I want to choose the best answer.

Answer B doesn’t use fewer words, but there is a conjunction. The conjunction “but” usually means “except” or “unless.” If I say the two sentences together with the word “except” or “unless” between them, it doesn’t make sense. Choice B is not the best answer.

Answer C has the same conjunction as choice A, but it also has the same number of words as the two original sentences. It is correct, but it is not the best way to combine the two sentences.

Answer D doesn’t have fewer words. It has the conjunction “because” joining the two sentences. This conjunction means that the second sentence is the reason for the idea in the first sentence. That is not true, so choice D is incorrect.

After I think about all the answer choices, I know that **Answer A is correct.**

When I chose a correct answer, I had to be sure that I read all the answers first. If I had chosen the first answer that seemed to be true, I may not have chosen the best answer. For instance, if choice D had been the first answer I looked at, I might have chosen it without reading the rest of the choices. Then I would have marked the incorrect answer.

6 Which sentence is **not** a good detail to support the topic of the paragraph?

The first thing I have to do is decide what the topic of the paragraph is. It seems to be about looking for sand dollars on the beach. Now I can decide which sentence does not match looking for sand dollars on the beach.

Answer A is sentence 3, so I will reread it. This sentence is about walking on the beach “looking for sand dollars.” The narrator says he “gave up.” The sentence fits the topic.

Answer B is sentence 4, so I will reread that sentence. It tells about “Toby” who finds “one every time he goes to the beach.” This might be on-topic because it tells that another person can find the sand dollars on the beach. It might be off-topic because it tells about the narrator’s brother, not the narrator. But the narrator tells that he and his brother look for sand dollars together in the sentence before this one, so this is probably on-topic. I think I will look at the next answers before making my decision.

Answer C is sentence 5 and I need to reread it, too. It tells me about another way the narrator can get a sand dollar, but it is about taking one from a room. I know the topic is about looking for sand dollars by the ocean. This sentence is about sand dollars, but the sand dollars are in a room, not on the beach. I think this one may be the right answer, but I will look at the last one just to be sure.

Answer D is sentence 6. When I reread this sentence, it tells me that the narrator is thinking that “tomorrow” is “another chance to find one.” I know that he is referring to sand dollars, so this sentence is about the topic.

Now, I have to decide between B and C. Since B is saying that Toby finds sand dollars on the beach and C is about taking a sand dollar from a room, I think B is on topic. The sentence for answer C is not about finding sand dollars on the beach, so it is off-topic.

The correct answer is C.

9 You are writing a letter to your principal to get permission to have a school celebration. What is the **best** sentence to include in your letter?

This question is asking about writing a letter. I know there are two kinds of letters, a formal one and a friendly one. Since this letter is to my principal and not one of my friends, it is a formal letter. I know that I have to use a formal voice when I write a formal letter. I will look at all the answers and decide which choice is using a formal voice.

Answer A uses a slang expression, “da bomb,” that I use when I talk with my friends. I don’t think this is a formal voice.

Answer B does not use slang, but it tells the principal that we will like him if he lets us have a celebration. This is more formal than answer A, but it is almost like a threat. I think I should look at the next choices.

Answer C is formal and it doesn’t use slang. It also doesn’t threaten the principal. This is probably the answer, but I will check the next one in case it is a better answer.

Answer D has no slang, but it tells the principal what to do. The letter is meant to ask for permission. I think my choice of C is correct because it does not use slang, it does not threaten the principal, and it is a polite way to ask for something in a formal voice.

The correct answer is C.

Extended Writing Responses

On the next few pages, you will find student writing samples that have been scored with the AIMS Holistic Rubric Based on 6 Traits. There are also annotations, or explanations, that tell why the paper earned the score it has been given. Read the papers and the annotations to understand the qualities and writing skill represented in the score point 4 paper (Meets) and the score point 6 paper (Exceeds).

Prompt Grade 5

Imagine one morning you wake up and look in the mirror to see a different reflection. You realize you have turned into the principal of your school.

Write a story in which you describe what happens when you go to school that day.

Read the score point 4 and score point 6 papers on the next pages. The papers are followed by an explanation of the skills that are shown in each.

Grade 5 Student paper scored with the Holistic Rubric Based on 6 Traits

Score Point 4

This morning I woke up and looked in the mirror, I looked as old as an Eighty-five year old granny. I was my school principal. I was freaking out at first, but as I was thinking about it more and more things got better. I didn't know what to do if my parents saw me, so I jumped out the window and on the roof. I tripped and fell on my dad's car, luckily the sun roof was opened or that could have hurt.

I didn't know the first thing about driving so I borrowed a bike I found. I knew I had to go to school or my parents would see me, so I rode the bike to school. At first I had no idea what to do, then some teachers asked me to go to the teachers lounge. When I got inside I saw video games, a pool table, and a ping-pong table. Wow! I thought being a teacher is a lot more difficult, but it is more than being a student.

I went to the library to see any books about body transfer. I found one, it was a Captain Underpants, it said the only way transfer bodies is to find the body you want to switch with and lick pizza. I was willing to try anything. So I was looking for my body, but first I went to my grade records and changed them all into As.

Grade 5 Score Point 4, page 2

As I was looking for my body I went to the lunch room to get some pizza. I was thinking where would be, so I went to Mrs. Parker's class. But when I tripped the pizza looked nasty. I saw my body and grabbed my body and licked the pizza. I heard my body say beep-beep. I was my alarm clock and it was all a dream. I checked in the mirror to make sure, no! It's all happening again.

Grade 5 Score Point 4, page 3

The student who wrote this paper is imaginative and offers many ideas, but fails to develop them with details, explanation, and/or examples. The paragraphs have too many ideas and not enough development. The writer seems to be rushing through this story. The writer may know what is happening in his/her head, but the reader can only guess. For instance, what sound did it make when the writer jumped out of the window and landed on (or does the writer mean “in?”) dad’s car? How fast did the writer pedal the borrowed bike? What did it look like? Was there any reaction from students or teachers when the principal arrived at school on a bike? The body transfer idea is attention-getting, but the writer finally finds his/her body, trips, and the story is over. More details of the body transfer would make the story much more interesting. The rushing is really noticeable here.

Advice for this writer is to not rush through the development. If more supporting details were offered, the story could come alive. For instance, the idea of changing grades deserves a paragraph of its own. A writer needs to be aware of the audience and to be sure to bring the audience into the story. The grades paragraph might have a rhetorical question: “Wouldn’t you change your grades if you had a chance?” Or maybe the writer could think about the fairness of changing his/her grades and not other student’s grades.

The “Eighty-five year old granny” is a descriptive way to say “old.” Good job! Add a couple other details about walking slowly or a gravelly voice, or even later in the paper about how out of breath the principal is when she gets to school after pedaling a bicycle. This could also be a paragraph of its own.

The writer needs to be sure that all the sentences are complete and that no words are left out. Sometimes recopying in a rush will make us leave out words. The person who is scoring the paper can only guess at what a sentence with missing words really means. Also, try not to overuse words and phrases. “So I” is used four times. The sentences nearly all begin with “I” and a verb. Try to change the beginnings of sentences. Instead of “I didn’t know the first thing about driving so I borrowed a bike I found” use “Driving was not one of my skills and I didn’t even know how. There was a rusty bike on my porch, so I jumped on and began to pedal to school.”

Conventions are good in this paper.

Grade 5 Student paper scored with the Holistic Rubric Based on 6 Traits

Score Point 6

The Principal

It was a cold Monday morning. My alarm had just turned on and blasted a hip-hop song. I groggily turned off my loud alarm and sat up. I put on my fuzzy blue slippers and slowly shuffled across the room to the bathroom. I stopped abruptly. A tingling feeling spread throughout my body. I felt different. Different as in when you move and you get that feeling that everyone thinks you're different. I walked forward into the bathroom. My reflection caught my eye. I was different! I was my principal! "How... what... where." I stammered.

Suddenly my thoughts were broken by a loud chime. "Oh-no!" I said aloud. It was 7:00. "I'm going to be late!" I said loudly. I bustled around brushing my teeth, brushing my hair, getting dressed, and putting on shoes. When I was ready, I raced out the door. I totally forgot about the car (since I was now over 45 yrs. old, I could drive) and raced all the way to school. I scrambled up the grey flagstone steps and burst in the door.

The students were quickly and quietly

Grade 5 Score Point 6, page 2

filing into their classrooms. Within a matter of minutes, the hall was empty. Suddenly, a happy thought swam through my head. "I don't have to go to class," I whispered. I smiled and walked towards the office.

As soon as I sat down in the big, comfy, black leather chair in my office, 2 men carrying briefcases came in. "We are from the school board," they said "and we are here to inspect your school." I didn't do anything but stare and smile. "Would you kindly show us around this pleasant school?" asked the tallest of the 2 men. "I would be honored." I said as I guided them out of my office. I showed them the lunch room, gym, library, classrooms, field, playground, and took them back to the office. "Thank you," they said as they handed me a paper and left.

The paper said we passed the inspection. I sat down hard. "Boy, does Principal Lisa have a hard job." Suddenly, the tingling feeling came over me. I, again, felt different. Principal Lisa stood in front of me straightening her tie. "Get back to class," she said and walked away. I smiled and shuffled to my classroom.

Grade 5 Score Point 6, page 3

This response begins with an inviting beginning that is strong and tells the reader exactly what is happening to the narrator. From the “hip-hop” song for an alarm, to the “fuzzy blue slippers,” to the “tingling feeling throughout my body,” the narrator includes the reader in the events that take place. The student has control of the topic and offers details that support every part of the narrative. It is easy to picture yourself in the place of the writer because of the description. Action verbs like blasted, shuffled, bustled, stammered, scrambled, and guided keep the story moving along in an interesting way. Other words are quite descriptive, such as groggily, abruptly (abruptly), tingling, reflection, flagstone, and pleasant. Although two are misspelled, the reader still understands them and the details they describe.

Sentences sound natural and show writing skill. For instance, “Within a matter of minutes, the hall was empty. Suddenly, a happy thought swam through my head. ‘I don’t have to go to class.’ I whispered. I smiled and walked towards the office.” The writer uses a period (class. I whispered) where a comma should be (class, I whispered), but overall, most conventions are correct.

Using dialogue to bring the story alive also adds interest to the paper. It sounds natural and helps to move the action along. The writer supports ideas carefully with explanation and details. For instance, the reader understands that two men are inspecting the school as the narrator takes them from place to place. “Would you kindly show us around this pleasant school.” asked the tallest of the 2 men. “I would be honored.” I said as I guided them out of my office. The period for a comma error is present again, so the writer needs to review the rules of writing dialogue.

The writer ends the story with a satisfying conclusion. The school passes inspection, the narrator tingles and turns back into his/herself, and “shuffled to my classroom” as the principal orders.

This writer is creative and uses language and conventions very well. The paper shows skill above grade level in all the parts of writing. The focus and control of the paper keep the reader’s attention.